
Press Release

For Immediate Release

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Hampton Partners With VEC TEC To Offer New E-Commerce Business Assistance Grant

April 13, 2004 - Hampton, Va. – This morning, the City of Hampton announced a new \$30,000 grant program to assist for-profit small to mid-size businesses to obtain access to e-commerce marketing solutions through the Virginia Electronic Commerce Technology Center (VEC TEC) at Christopher Newport University. Nearly 100 members of the Hampton business community attended the City's semi-annual Ambassador's Breakfast Program to learn about this new program and other resources that may impact a company's financial bottom line.

Funded annually by the City of Hampton, the program will be administered by VEC TEC and the Hampton Department of Economic Development. Individual awards range from \$1,500 to \$4,500. Grant program services include web site design and development, online shopping cart systems and search engine optimization. All businesses in Hampton are eligible to apply.

Hampton's Industrial Development Authority (IDA) recommended the program for approval by the City. IDA members say it is a valuable service that will ensure its existing businesses are much more competitive.

"Technology plays a vital role in today's business environment and we are pleased to play a role in bringing VEC TEC's impressive e-commerce offerings to the Hampton business community," said Jack Ezzell, Jr., Hampton IDA Vice Chairman and President/CEO of Zel Technologies. "The experienced VEC TEC staffers understand how to apply technology to solve problems and enhance business operations."

"This program will provide small businesses the bridge they need to begin e-commerce," said Lynne Moore, Hampton IDA Board Member and President of Lynne North American. "For those that have begun to implement e-commerce solutions and are in a holding pattern, it will provide the momentum to advance their e-commerce position."

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Hampton City Councilman Randy Gilliland believes the program could be the difference between real success and just getting by for businesses. “This program is an ideal example of the kind of support that provides the ability for a company to execute better in the marketplace than their competition,” said Gilliland. “Our hope is that the grant program will bring about increased competitiveness for Hampton businesses – regionally, nationally and internationally.”

E Commerce Business Assistance Grant Details

Services within the program include web site design and development, online shopping cart systems, custom database development, and search engine optimization.

Businesses must be located in Hampton and be for-profit.

Projects must be legal, ethical, and commercially viable, and project potential (job growth and retention, increased revenues, etc.) will be assessed.

Grants are made on a first-come, first served basis.

Estimated individual awards range from \$1,500 to \$2,500 each. Minority and women owned businesses eligible to receive awards up to \$4,500.

Maximum grant amount not to exceed 50% of total project cost.

Businesses interested in applying for the grant should contact VECTEC at (757) 594-7092 or email hamptonidagrants@vectec.org. For information about other business programs and resources visit www.hamptonva.biz and www.vectec.org.

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